

REMARKS

Claims 1-32, 39-44, and 48-60 are pending after this amendment.

Applicant has amended claims 1, 4-6, 17, 19-21, 39, 41, 48, and 50-52 in order to more particularly define the invention. The amendments were not necessitated by the claim rejections. Applicant makes no admission as to the patentability or unpatentability of the originally filed claims.

The amendments and remarks presented herein are in response to the Office Action dated April 5, 2006.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-3, 7-10, 17, 18, 22-24, 39, 40, 48, 49, and 53-56 under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over Glaser in view of Kim et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1, which has been amended merely to better define Applicant's invention, recites:

"A user interface for a device including a display, for manipulating an object displayed on the display, the device executing program instructions for providing the user interface, the user interface comprising:

a displayed representation of the object; and

a control region surrounding the displayed representation of the object and comprising a plurality of zones for accepting object manipulation commands via an input device and via at least two modes of user input;

wherein, for at least one of the zones, at least two commands are activatable within the zone, depending on the mode of user input received."

The claimed user interface provides a control region surrounding a displayed representation of the object. A plurality of zones in the control region accept object manipulation commands. For at least one of the zones, at least two commands are activatable within the zone, depending on the mode of user input received. Accordingly, within a single zone, the user can provide a first mode of user input to cause a first command to be activated, or can provide a second mode of user input to cause a second command to be activated. The zones therefore provide flexibility by allowing the ability to activate different commands in different ways. This flexibility improves ease of use while providing a robust command set.

Neither of the cited references, taken alone or in any combination, teaches or discloses the claimed invention. Glaser merely describes a graphics display for a light microscope. The graphics display is superimposed on an optical image of a preparation carried on the slide mounted in the microscope. As shown in Figs. 4a through 4c of Glaser, a circular image area is concentrically surrounded by an annular system-control area. A stylus can be used to activate a region of the system-control area to instruct the computer to perform an operation such as moving the stage into a desired region of the slide.

The Examiner correctly stated that Glaser does not disclose two modes of user input. The Examiner stated that using two modes of user input is well known in the art, and cited Kim as an example.

Applicant respectfully submits that there is no teaching in either of the cited references that would motivate the combination suggested by the Examiner. Glaser's light microscope display system is in an area of art that is completely unrelated to Kim's infrared sensor for a laptop computer. Since these disclosures are in no way related to another and contain no motivation for their combination, Applicant submits that the Examiner's proposed combination of Glaser and Kim is the result of hindsight reconstruction using Applicant's own disclosure.

Furthermore, Applicant respectfully submits that Kim fails to teach or suggest the limitations of claim 1 as amended.

Kim merely describes an infrared input device to realize a mouse-like function and a sensor configuration permitting a notebook computer to achieve a wide angle infrared sensor response. Kim discloses that the infrared input device can comprise a mouse and at least one other input device such as a touchpad. It is apparent, therefore, that Kim is solely directed toward a hardware implementation for a particular type of input device for use with a laptop computer. The hardware solution of Kim solves a completely different problem and operates at a completely dif-

ferent level than the claimed invention which is directed toward zones within a user interface. One skilled in the art will recognize that, in general, hardware devices are capable of supporting many different types of user interfaces, and conversely, user interfaces are often capable of being implemented in many different hardware devices and platforms.

Specifically, the claimed invention includes limitations that a plurality of zones accept commands via at least two modes of user input, and that at least two commands are activatable within a zone, depending on the mode of user input received. The mere mention in Kim of a device that includes both a mouse and at least one other input device such as a touchpad is not sufficient to teach, disclose, or render obvious the claimed techniques of accepting commands where two commands are activatable within a zone.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that, even if the references were combined in the manner suggested by the Examiner, the combination would still fail to render the claimed invention unpatentable.

Claim 17 is a method claim that recites similar limitations to those discussed above with respect to claim 1. Claim 39 is a computer program product claim that recites similar limitations to those discussed above with respect to claim 1. Claim 48 is a system claim that recites similar limitations to those discussed above with re-

spect to claim 1. Accordingly, for at least the reasons discussed above, claims 17, 39, and 48 are submitted to be patentably distinct from Glaser and Kim, taken alone or in any combination.

Claims 2-3 and 7-10 depend from claim 1 and incorporate all of the limitations of amended claim 1. Claims 18 and 22-24 depend from claim 17 and incorporate all of the limitations of amended claim 17. Claim 40 depends from claim 39 and incorporates all of the limitations of amended claim 39. Claims 49 and 53-56 depend from claim 48 and incorporate all of the limitations of amended claim 48. Accordingly, for at least the reasons discussed above, claims 2-3, 7-10, 18, 22-24, 40, 49, and 53-56 are submitted to be patentably distinct from the cited references.

The dependent claims recite additional limitations not found in the cited references. By way of example, Applicant hereby discusses some of these distinguishing limitations.

Claim 7 recites that "the zones are arranged in a grid." Claim 8 recites that "the zones are arranged in a matrix comprising rows of cells, and ... the object representation is located within a cell of the matrix." Claim 9 recites that "zones are arranged in a matrix comprising three rows of three cells each, and ... the object representation is located in the center cell of the center row." The Examiner stated that Glaser discloses such arrangements at Figs. 4a-4c. However, Glaser merely de-

scribes (and illustrates) an annular system-control area (see col. 5, line 24 and Figs. 4a-4c). There is no hint or suggestion of any grid-based arrangement as recited in claim 7. Nor is there any teaching of an arrangement including a matrix with rows of cells. Indeed, the annular system-control area of Glaser teaches away from a matrix arrangement. Finally, there is no hint or suggestion of any particular dimension of a matrix, in particular a matrix comprising three rows of three cells each. Should the Examiner maintain the rejection of these claims, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner point out where such limitations are taught in Glaser. Indeed, Applicant's review of Glaser reveals that Glaser contemplates an annular (i.e. ring-like) arrangement only and does not describe any grid-based or matrix-like arrangement as claimed herein.

The Examiner rejected claims 4-6, 19-21, 41, and 50-52 under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over Glaser in view of Kim et al. and Scott. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 4-6, which have been amended merely to better define Applicant's invention, depend from claim 1 and incorporate all of the limitations of amended claim 1. Claim 4 further recites "a keyboard including keys for activating commands associated with the zones." Claim 5 recites that "standard keys on the key-

board are selectively assigned to activate commands associated with the zones.”

Claim 6 recites that “the input device comprises a keyboard including additional keys for activating commands associated with the zones.” Accordingly, these claims recite functionality that allows the user to activate a command associated with a zone by pressing a key on the keyboard. By providing such functionality in addition to at least one other mode of user input, the present invention offers increased flexibility and ease-of-use, accommodating both novice users (who may be less familiar with the software and who may wish to use an input device for directly manipulating an on-screen zone) and expert users (who may be more familiar with the software and who may wish to use keyboard shortcuts).

None of the cited references teaches a keyboard including keys that operate in the manner claimed.

The Examiner correctly states that Glaser does not disclose such a keyboard.

The Examiner asserts that Scott teaches a keyboard wherein keys are selectively assigned to zones. By contrast, the teachings of Scott are completely unrelated to the claimed subject matter. Scott merely describes techniques for entering alphanumeric or other text using an input device having a small number of keys. In particular, Scott describes a technique for entering text using a game controller having two sets of four keys each. A selection of a sequence of displayed characters defines

a particular character. Accordingly, the difference between Scott and the present invention is clear: Scott is directed toward a user interface for text entry, while the present invention is directed toward a user interface for activating commands.

Accordingly, claims 4-6, 19-21, 41, and 50-52 are submitted to be patentably distinct from the cited references.

The Examiner rejected claims 11-14, 25-28, 30, 32, 42-43, and 57-58 under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over Glaser in view of Kim et al. and Haynes et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 11-14 depend from claim 1 and incorporate all of the limitations of amended claim 1. Claim 11 further recites "a menu activatable by performing a menu activation command for a zone, the menu comprising commands, wherein the menu is displayed in proximity to the zone upon activation." Thus, in addition to features recited in claim 1, a menu is also available for a zone. The user has the ability to activate at least two commands within a zone, and can also activate a menu for a zone. Users are thus presented with multiple mechanisms for activating commands, and can choose the mechanism that suits them best at any given time.

None of the cited references teaches a menu that operates in the manner claimed.

The Examiner correctly states that Glaser does not disclose such a menu.

The Examiner asserts that Haynes teaches displaying a menu in proximity to an activated zone. By contrast, the Haynes merely describes a technique for visually reinforcing a correspondence between an item in a menu and an item on a toolbar. In Haynes, the corresponding menu item and toolbar item are located in different parts of the screen and operate to perform the same (or similar) functions. This is essentially the converse of the claimed invention, where a user can provide input for a zone in two or more different modes to activate different commands in the same zone. In other words, Haynes relates different on-screen elements with the same command, while the claimed invention activates different commands using the same zone. The menu recited in claim 11 provides one way the user can activate a command in accordance with the present invention.

Furthermore, the portion of Haynes cited by the Examiner (Fig. 3) merely illustrates a well-known paradigm for a pull-down menu that is made available when a user clicks on a menu bar. There is no teaching in the cited portion or anywhere within Haynes of the specific features claimed herein, where a menu is activated for a zone having the recited limitations.

Claims 12-14 depend from claim 11 and incorporate all of the limitations of claim 11. Accordingly, claims 12-14 are patentably distinguishable over the cited references for the reasons given above.

Furthermore, claims 12-14 recite additional limitations. For example, claim 12 recites “at least one of the menu commands is also directly activatable by at least one of stroking, pressing a button, or double-clicking within the zone.” The claimed invention thus provides at least two ways of activating a command: selecting it within the menu or directly activating it by stroking, pressing a button, or double-clicking within the zone. This is another feature that provides flexibility and adaptability to differing levels of user expertise.

The Examiner stated that Kim’s mouse mode inherently comprises a mouse button (double-click command) for activating a menu. However, neither Kim nor either of the other cited references describe any technique where a menu is activatable by performing a command for a zone, and at least one of the menu commands is also directly activatable by interacting with the zone in the manner claimed. By contrast, the mere mention of double-clicking or otherwise activating a menu is not sufficient to teach or suggested any technique of directly activating a command that is also available within the menu.

Claims 25, 27, 28 30, 32, 42, 43, 57, and 58 variously recite limitations discussed above in connection with claims 11-14. Accordingly, for at least the reasons given above, these claims are submitted to be patentably distinguishable over the cited references.

The Examiner rejected claims 15, 16, 29, 31, 44, 59, and 60 under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over Glaser in view of Kim et al. and Kurtenbach. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 15 and 16 depend from claim 11 and incorporate all of the limitations of claim 11. Claim 15 further recites "wherein the menu includes, for at least one command, an icon indicating a stroke direction for directly activating the command." By providing a stroke direction icon in the menu, the claimed invention informs the user that the command can be activated directly, without accessing the menu, by performing the corresponding stroke input operation.

Claim 16 recites "a stroke command for a zone is activatable by positioning an on-screen cursor within the zone and stroking the cursor." Claim 16 thus provides a mechanism by which a user can directly activate a command by performing a stroke input operation within the same zone that is used for activating the menu. This provides the user with a choice as to how to activate a command: invoke a

menu for a zone and select from that menu, or stroke directly within the zone. This flexibility allows the user interface to be readily adaptable to both novice and expert users.

None of the cited references discloses such a feature. The Examiner correctly stated that Glaser, even if modified according to the Examiner's suggestions, does not disclose a stroke command.

The Examiner stated that Kurtenbach discloses a stroke command. However, Kurtenbach merely describes a system that combines two menu portions: a linear portion and a radial portion. The two menu portions occupy different areas of the screen; accordingly, there is no teaching or suggestion of different ways to interact with a single element or zone that occupies one part of the screen. Furthermore, there is no teaching anywhere in Kurtenbach of a menu including icons indicating stroke directions. Finally, Kurtenbach, even if combined with the other cited references, still fails to disclose a technique wherein a command can be activated in two ways: within a menu for a zone, or directly by stroking within the zone.

Claims 29, 31, 44, 59, and 60 variously recite limitations similar to those discussed above in connection with claims 15 and 16. Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, the claims are submitted to be patentably distinct from the cited references, taken alone or in any combination.

On the basis of the above amendments, consideration of this application and the early allowance of all claims herein are requested.

Should the Examiner wish to discuss the above amendments and remarks, or if the Examiner believes that for any reason direct contact with Applicant's representative would help to advance the prosecution of this case to finality, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

Favorable action is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,
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By: _____


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